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## **Arkansas FireSMART App Now Available for Prescribed Burning**

**LITTLE ROCK, AR** – The Arkansas Department of Agriculture and the Arkansas Department of Energy and Environment are pleased to announce the launch of the Arkansas FireSMART mobile application. This app, created with funding from the Environmental Protection Agency, offers row crop producers and forest landowners a simple, easy way to check conditions and report prescribed burns.

With the new app, producers can select the area they plan to burn on a map and the application will generate real-time weather data, letting producers know if current conditions align with the state's Voluntary Smoke Management Guidelines. Under Voluntary Smoke Management Guidelines, producers and landowners report prescribed burns to the Arkansas Department of Agriculture's Dispatch Center. The FireSMART app also streamlines this process, making the app a one-stop shop for reporting and information.

"The Arkansas Department of Agriculture encourages everyone within the agriculture industry to follow voluntary smoke management guidelines," said Arkansas Secretary of Agriculture Wes Ward. "The FireSMART app gives them a quick and easy tool to continue to be good neighbors to all Arkansans."

"We are pleased to partner with the Department of Agriculture, Arkansas Farm Bureau, Arkansas Rice Federation, and others in today's release of the FireSMART app. This publicly available tool, developed through collaborative efforts, will benefit communities across Arkansas by making smoke-management planning easy for agricultural producers and forestry prescribed fire practitioners," said Becky Keogh, Secretary of the Arkansas Department of Energy and Environment.

"Prescribed fire is a critically important tool in a farmer's toolbox and this newly-developed app is an additional resource to assist farmers in planning and using fire as we work to prepare for next season. Our community looks forward to working with other agricultural organizations to share and encourage the use of the FireSMART app," said David Gairhan, Arkansas Rice Federation Chairman.

In row crop production, prescribed fire is used in the fall as part of crop management plans to remove stubble following the harvest of rice, soybeans, corn, and cotton. Prescribed burning is an efficient and economical control method for preparing fields for the next growing season and eliminating pests and diseases. Burning crop residue also allows for no-till or reduced-till planting during the next growing season.

Prescribed burning provides many benefits to forest landowners including vegetation control, ecosystem restoration, and wildlife habitat improvement. Additionally, prescribed fire makes landscapes more resistant to wildfires by removing flammable debris and vegetation. It is one of the best tools for improving wildfire safety.

Access the Fire Smart app at [arkfiresmart.com/](http://arkfiresmart.com/). Read more about prescribed fire and its benefits at [bit.ly/presburn](http://bit.ly/presburn). Find the Voluntary Smoke Management Guidelines at [agriculture.arkansas.gov/arkansas-voluntary-smoke-management-guidelines/](http://agriculture.arkansas.gov/arkansas-voluntary-smoke-management-guidelines/).

The Arkansas Department of Agriculture is dedicated to the development and implementation of policies and programs for Arkansas agriculture and forestry to keep its farmers and ranchers competitive in national and international markets while ensuring safe food, fiber, and forest products for the citizens of the state and nation. Visit [agriculture.arkansas.gov/](http://agriculture.arkansas.gov/). The Arkansas Department of Agriculture offers its programs to all eligible persons regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability and is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

